

Supply—Agriculture

sometimes our friends in the opposition require a little bit of memory brushing up, particularly those in the official opposition, as we realize that they are extremely weak on western agriculture at the moment. The cash advance program which they said could not work has worked tremendously well all over the west, even in our area which is not primarily a commercial grain producing area.

One other thing I should like to mention with regard to agriculture is the transport situation. We all know that this is the primary problem which faces western agriculture, because we have to pay for everything we bring in and all we ship out. We appreciated the stand taken by the government with regard to the Crowsnest pass arrangements, and I think we should point out to the president of the Saskatchewan wheat pool in this connection that he is receiving, as representative of the grain producers, a substantial subsidy from the government which livestock producers are not receiving.

We hope the commission which is now being set up with regard to freight rates will delve into the whole question of the equalization of freight rates, because this is vital to the economic life of western Canada.

I think that puts my stand clearly on record. When I spoke on the address I had some remarks to make with regard to the delegation coming to Ottawa. I have not changed my opinion in this regard. One of the western daily newspapers recently carried an editorial entitled "Horner in a Corner".

I would say that I am certainly in a corner, the corner of the family farm and of those who are making a career of agriculture, who are working at it all the time. That is the corner in which I want to be, and the corner in which I intend to stay.

Before I close I should like to make a few remarks with regard to the organization of the Department of Agriculture, and I should like also to compliment the minister on the efficient manner in which he has headed this very difficult department and supervised the work of reorganization. I should also like to say a word with regard to research, particularly into the veterinary-medical aspects of agriculture. I think sometimes all of us do not realize how important this particular aspect of agriculture is, not only to the health of our animals but also to the health of our people generally.

There is only one complaint I have to make in this regard, and that is that we are not spending enough money; we have not a large enough staff of research scientists working in the animal diseases branch. We realize

[Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson.)

that it is difficult to hold these experts, because they are highly trained men and private industry is competing strongly for their services. However, this is a vital part of the department's work and one which requires our constant help and scrutiny. I am particularly indebted to the Minister of Agriculture for including John's disease, or paratuberculosis in cattle, under the animal diseases act this has already helped, in my area, to give one farmer a little hope for the future. I am sure, too, that his neighbours are also very thankful that the government has enacted regulations which make more effective control of the disease possible.

As I have said previously in this house, animal diseases cost this country a tremendous amount of money. Foot-and-mouth disease alone has cost farmers something in the neighbourhood of \$600 million. Any money which is spent in the eradication of these diseases and in research into their control is money well spent and will mean a saving in the long run. If 20 years ago we had tackled the problem of brucellosis and done what we are now doing, the cost of eradicating that disease would be only a fraction of what it is today. However, I can say that the department is ahead of schedule in its brucellosis program, and those responsible should be complimented on the rapid and very efficient way in which they have gone about eradicating this disease from our herds.

At this point I urge, once again, that the government should give serious consideration to setting up a veterinary college in western Canada, if not directly then through the agency of the Canada Council. This is a very pressing need not only because it would mean better treatment for our animals but because it would enable the recruiting of veterinary surgeons who would be available for the inspection of meat, its proper grading, and so on.

And now if the hon. member for Timiskaming would like to ask his question I should be happy to answer it.

Mr. Peters: I should like to ask the hon. member if he feels there was a difference between the delegation which represented the Saskatchewan area of the wheat pool and the over-all group which presented the deficiency payment brief. Did the hon. member agree with the over-all brief?

Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson): I certainly do say there was a difference between the delegation from Saskatchewan and the delegation from Alberta. Even in Saskatchewan there was a difference in the delegation; there are those delegates who are aligned to major wheat growing, and there are the others. Incidentally, I find it paradoxical that the